

## KEEPING YOU ON YOUR TOES

Walking on the balls of the feet takes extra balance skill. This activity will keep participants on their toes!

### **Benefits »**

- Improves proprioceptive awareness.
- Teaches participants to maintain balance over a reduced base of support.
- Strengthens lower legs.

### **How to Do It »**

- Participants shift their weight to their toes, but do not lift their heels yet.
- Use the following cues.
  - Adjust your balance to this position for a few seconds (they should notice their weight is mostly on the toes, which dig in a bit). Do this a few times until it is comfortable.
  - Lift your heels and find your balance over the balls of your feet. Hover a moment there.
- Repeat several times so that balance on the toes seems stable for them.
- When they're ready, invite participants to walk on their toes beside a handrail or other balance support. They can hold onto the support as much as they want.
- Use these kinds of cues:
  - Shift your weight to your toes; regain your balance there a moment.
  - Lift your heels and hover a moment.
  - Are your knees soft? Abs in?
  - Ready to walk? Do you have a plan? (What do they know that will keep them balanced?)
  - Start walking. Try to take 10 steps.
  - Stop. Lower your heels and shift your weight back onto the whole foot.
- Rest and repeat.



### **Give It More Balance »**

- Can participants walk with only a light touch on the handrail? What about not touching the support?
- Tip-Toe Hopscotch: Place agility dots or masking-tape Xs on the floor in an easy or modified hopscotch pattern. Participants can tip-toe through these.

### **Keep It Safe »**

Provide plenty of hand holding and balance support. Let participants choose what they are willing to try. Be ready to help, especially the first few times.

### **Live It »**

Tip-toe walking is good balance practice because it requires walking on a small base of support. Posture, strength, and attention to balance all come into out to play.